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HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

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M. K. GANDHI

[For the first time the *Harijan* day falls on the 30th, the date of Gandhiji's death. The following editorial copied from the *Manas* of 25-2-1948, a weekly of California, U. S. A., will be appreciated by readers of the *Harijan*. We apologize to the publishers for reproducing it. —ED.]

The death of Mohandas K. Gandhi at the hands of a political assassin left no blemish on the life of India's — and the world's — great man. His violent end, coming at the close of an incalculably beneficent career, only confirms the popular feeling that Gandhi was a great spiritual teacher, for he is far from being the first reformer to meet this fate. Gandhi was an old man; his personal mission — so far as concerns political freedom of India — was accomplished. He had set an example in national and world patriotism for all who knew or heard of him to follow. He had declared his principles, many times, on all the issues confronting modern India. And he had, for years, applied those principles with originality and effectiveness.

So Gandhi's life, in the larger sense of his motives and personal capacities, was already complete. These could be augmented only by other men, by the people of India, and nothing that they might have done while he yet lived is in any way prevented by his death. It remains for India to fulfil the mission of Gandhi.

A role given to Gandhi by the Indian people, and in some measure accepted by him, was that of their "father". The reverence felt towards him was filial in spirit. For many millions, therefore, the bereavement is intensely personal, a feeling which is undoubtedly stronger than the sense of "national" loss. As the years pass, however, it may be recognized that the gift of Gandhi to India was something more than a wise, paternal guidance, it was something greater, even, for India, than his historic demonstration of the moral strength of the philosophy of non-violence, which was rather a gift to modern civilization than to India alone.

Gandhi was a great man, first, because of his indomitable will. More than anything else, he embodied the spiritual force of an awakened and concentrated mind, fixed on his chosen objectives. No one could enslave Gandhi. No one could "conquer" Gandhi. Gandhi was a living example of the unconquerable human spirit. He might be imprisoned, but he could not be made unfree. In Gandhi became manifest a quality of manhood which holds the secret of the only future worth striving after for modern man. That was his great gift to India — not of the reverential figure of the "father", but the example of a free human being.

It seems unlikely that India will ever have another "father". This is an epoch in which India must grow to her own maturity and moral equilibrium, not by adoring her sages, but by becoming like them — like Gandhi.

The greatest tribute that India could pay to Gandhi would be to follow his example as a man. This would be more, much more, than repeating his words and imitating his actions. The wisdom in his words and the purpose behind his actions will continue to live, not from religious devotion to them, but from a resolve like Gandhi's, on the part of many, each man according to his light.

From Gandhi the people of India may learn also the meaning of purity of heart, and unqualified self-sacrifice. But they will not learn it by making a "code" of his personal habits, nor even by a literal following of his exhortations. They will learn it from the principle of *honesty* which came before anything else in his life, and from the imagination which he exercised in applying it.

If India can learn these things from Gandhi, India may have opportunity to teach them to the world.

Other Side

While some have doubted the wisdom of Shri Vinobaji for departing from the practice of reciting prayers in the language of the original scriptures, here is a letter from a correspondent to Shri Vinoba bringing forth the other side :

> "Your note on the language of the prayer reminds me of an incident that took place in Santiniketan years ago. You may know that in Santiniketan every morning and evening the inmates assemble together for prayers and chant some Sanskrit *mantras*. One evening a little girl was passing by with her grand-father when the prayers were being held. She was a newcomer to the Ashram and had never seen a prayer assembly before. So she asked her grand-father what the people were doing and was told that they were praying to God. She then wanted to know in what language they were praying. When her grand-father said that it was in Sanskrit, she quietly asked, 'Is it that God does not understand Bengali ?'"

Wardha, 7-5-'48

K. G. M.

VINOBA ON JAIN CONTRIBUTION TO HUMANITY

On 24-4-'48 Shri Vinoba was invited to address a gathering for the celebration of the Mahavir Birthday on the Gandhi Ground at Delhi.

Shri Vinoba said that Mahavir was born about twentyfive hundred years ago in India. The message he gave was not a new one. Mahavir was believed to be the twentyfourth, or last, *tirthankar* of the Jains. This meant that the Jain doctrine had come into existence several centuries before him. There was a prayer in the *Rigved* which said: अर्हन्, जिदं दयसे विश्वं अभवम्। (O Arhan, Thou art kind to this world.) In this *mantra* both the words *arhan* and kind (*daya*), which are the pet words of Jainism, have been used. Shri Vinoba believed that Jainism was probably as ancient as the Vedic religion. Of course, it was not of very great importance that a religion should be very ancient. Even if it was new but contained better exposition of truth, it was more valuable than one which did not do so but was merely ancient. It was right thought that was of greater importance and Jainism had made a great contribution towards right thinking.

The first well-known doctrine of Jainism was of kindness towards all creatures. Its second contribution to thought was not equally well-known but nonetheless was very important. It was the teaching that a person should keep an impartial attitude towards every question. One should not be dogmatic about any proposition, because dogmatism led to perceiving only one side of the question. Jainism taught examination of every aspect of a problem. They called it "taking full view" (*samyaktwa*). That was a special contribution of Jainism. It was said that as a result of such non-dogmatic attitude, the number of Jains was not very large. But Shri Vinoba said that in his opinion if Jainism had spread considerably, it would have lost in merit. Its success consisted in its fewness of numbers. Jainism did not aim at establishing a religion apart from Hinduism, but was content to become merged into it by reforming it. If the message of kindness to all life and of maintaining an impartial attitude towards all questions was assimilated by the thirty crores of Hindus, it would be a success of Jainism. The word *Jain* itself meant conquest. He who had conquered himself was a true conqueror. *Veera* or brave is he who conquers the world, but *Mahavir* (i. e. supremely brave) was he who had conquered himself and had completely merged himself into the heart of the universe as sugar in milk.

It appeared, Shri Vinoba said, from the mediaeval history of India that, at one time, in schools the teachers were Jains while the students were Hindus. In Maharashtra the first lesson of a child commenced with salutations to Ganesha and Siddha respectively. Ganesha being the popular deity of the Hindus, the Jain teachers taught the student to give him the first salute. Siddha was the name of Mahavir and salutation to him came next. This showed what influence the Jains had over society. But the humility of the Jains did not allow them to put Siddha before Ganesha. The Jains never demanded particular rights for themselves. They regarded themselves as reformers and that was their particular role. They had indeed brought about a great reform in the Hindu religion and should go along the same path in future. It was not by becoming *gurus*, but by becoming servants of the people that they could teach and reform. Thereby they would be able to propagate their doctrine more successfully.

Jains swore by *ahimsa*. So did also Gandhiji. But the non-violence of Gandhiji had produced strength. The sectarian non-violence of the Jains had not done that, because they interpreted non-violence in a narrow sphere. They went to the length of regarding even agriculture to be a violent occupation because they said that it involved the destruction of worms and weeds. But this non-violence of theirs did not prevent them from trading in agricultural products. The teachers of Jainism had said however that those who did, caused to do or supported violence were all equally guilty of it. If agriculture was an occupation of violence, then trade in agricultural products was equally so.

Some Jains had the habit of feeding sugar to ants. He knew a kind-hearted man who every day went a long way out of the town in order to put some sugar at every place where there was an ant-hole. Once he saw that an ox came on the spot where ants had gathered to carry away the sugar, and hundreds of ants were trampled under its legs. If that good man had not put sugar there, these ants need not have died. It was thus a wrong manner of showing kindness. He who nourished life was responsible also for its creation and destruction. It was impossible for man to take up all these responsibilities. It was the province of Providence. Thoughtless kindness simply aggravated violence.

Gandhiji therefore taught that they should first employ non-violence for bringing an end to enmity between man and man. They should purify themselves by abjuring jealousy, hatred, anger and other violent passions. Jealousy was a form of violence. So there should be no jealousy between man and man. Nobody was jealous of an ox or any other animal. So, it was in the relations between man and man that non-violence had to be tested.

Non-violence was inseparably associated with truth. The Jain scriptures laid as much emphasis on truth as on non-violence. But there were several Jains who had no scruples in resorting to falsehood in their commercial dealings and still believed that because they were not cultivators, but simply traded in agricultural products, they were free from the taint of violence. That was not the method of being free from that taint. For, if there was no truth, there could be no adherence to non-violence. He, therefore, strongly recommended to the audience that they should pledge themselves to truth and to the service of afflicted humanity. He asked them to look around them. There were thousands of refugees in difficulty. Government was trying to mitigate their sufferings, but that did not exempt the public from performing their part of the duty. If kindness was their particular virtue, it should exhibit itself in the form of some service to

these people. If the Jains did this, they would be rendering a great service to the cause of their religion.

MEAT DIET

After Shri Vinoba had concluded he was asked by some members of the audience to give his opinion on the question of meat eating. Shri Vinoba, therefore, had to speak again. He said that when the Jains thought of kindness, meat diet came first to their mind. There was no difference of opinion among the wise that meat diet should be abandoned. But the question to be considered was how that could be made universal.

In ancient times all people, including the *rishis* and *munis* (sages, recluses etc.) ate meat. Later on these wise men felt that it did not become man to live on the flesh of animals. In order, therefore, to get meat-free diet, they began to seek other food and invented agriculture. They realized that if man grew food, he could reduce his meat diet. Thus the creed of vegetarianism was born in the philosophy of non-violence. Similarly, they discovered that by taking cow's milk they could entirely free themselves from the necessity of meat diet. It was said in the *Vedas*: गोभिः तरेम अमतिं दुरेवाम् । — "By taking to the service of cow, we have found the way of freeing ourselves from the evil of meat diet." The cow provided the ox, which was useful for cultivation, and it also gave milk which made flesh eating unnecessary. To the Jains perhaps belonged the credit of popularizing vegetarianism on a large scale. Later on *Vaishnavas* and *Brahmans* also adopted it. Perhaps there were about three crores of people now who never took meat. Others who took it did not consider it good. This was a success of Jain thought.

If the idea was that all people should abjure meat, it must be remembered that it could not be done by simply carrying on propaganda against it. It was necessary first to take measures to produce milk, fruits, vegetables and other vegetable food materials in large quantities. It was only when the poor got these things in full measure that they could give up meat diet. There was, Shri Vinoba said, a river flowing in front of his Ashram at Pavnar. Fishermen came there every day and after a full day's labour collected a few fish and maintained themselves upon it with very great difficulty. He witnessed that thing every day. But he had no heart to prevent them from doing that because he knew that only when they could give the poor people something else to eat and live upon then only could they think of weaning them from flesh eating. Even ordinary grain was not easily available at present and in times of famine and short rations, the people somehow maintained themselves on fish. If they wanted these people to give up that occupation, they, (the propagandists) should, as the *Upanishad* said, take a pledge of growing more food. The Bengalis did not get anything to eat except rice by way of vegetable diet. By supplementing rice with fish they were able to maintain themselves. If they were asked to give up fish, they must consider what they could give them in its place.

The vegetarians had nothing to be proud of for being not flesh-eaters. The present vegetarians of India had not given up meat eating themselves. It had been given up by their remote ancestors, who had done it with very great effort and difficulty. So far as the present generations were concerned they had acquired it only by way of heredity and habit. Their upbringing had created in them such abhorrence for meat, that it prevented them from even looking at it. But the credit for that belonged to the ancestors. The present vegetarians took, in place of meat, things which the poor were unable to get. And still, when vegetarians fell ill, many of them freely took injections of animal origin without waiting to enquire what was given to them in those drugs. As a matter of fact it was much worse to take an injection of an animal substance than to take it orally, because when one took it orally only a part of it was assimilated and the rest was excreted. But by way of injection, the whole thing got into the blood stream directly. So it became absolute flesh eating. He, who consented to take an injection but refrained from taking it by mouth, did not do anything that deserved credit. Consequently, before asking people to give up meat eating, he would tell them to give up quarrels between man and man and selfishness and falsehood. He would also ask them to produce milk and fruit and vegetables in large quantities. Thereafter it would be the right time to popularize vegetarianism.

He would say one more thing. He would ask them to give up any notion of superiority on account of their vegetarianism. If a vegetarian thought that he was a better person than a meat eater, it was vanity. He would rather prefer a person who out of habit or helplessness ate meat but was humble, kind to man and animals and felt that it was his misfortune that he could not give up flesh to a person who though a vegetarian, uttered lies, lived in luxury and yet believed himself to be so superior to a flesh eater that he would take neither food nor water with him. This was all egotism and where there was egotism there could be no spiritual growth.

Shri Vinoba said that he had recently received a letter asking his opinion whether roots, tubers, seeds and leafy vegetables should be eaten or no. The *shastras* were full of fine distinctions on these matters. Being books of science, it was natural that they should go deep into every matter. But as a practical man he considered these things to be of minor importance. People entangled themselves in these small details while they forgot the main problems. These fine distinctions were proper for those who were advanced in discipline, who were, so to say, taking the university training of life. But at present they were in the primary classes. It was more necessary to know how much one should eat rather than what he should eat, for one's spiritual upliftment. A man who took simple *dal* and *roti* which was considered *rajas* (spiritually second class) food but took it in a moderate measure with full control over his palate was spiritually superior to one who took what was considered *sattvik* (or spiritually first class) food but in disproportionate quantities and with great gusto. He was aware, he concluded, that the Jains discussed very minutely the subject of spiritually edible and non-edible food. But in his opinion it was more important than that to control the palate and to take food in a proper measure.

24-4-'48 D. D.

HARIJAN

May 30 1948

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Last week I congratulated the Dr. Tarachand Committee for their progressive resolutions regarding the medium of instruction at the University stage. I wish it would have been equally possible for me to extend the same to his Committee on Secondary Education. I regret to observe that the resolutions as reported by the Associated Press of India are extremely disappointing. Let me first give some of the items of the resolutions :

1. That before joining the first year of a degree course, the student should undergo a course of education for twelve years ;

2. that with regard to the period of gradation of secondary education, after a compulsory junior basic course of five years there should be a senior basic or pre-secondary course for three years and then a secondary course for four years ;

3. that the teaching of the federal or national language should be started at the end of the junior basic stage and should be compulsory throughout the pre-secondary stage but may be optional thereafter ;

4. that English should be optional in the senior basic course except for those who take up the pre-secondary course ;

5. that English should be compulsory at the secondary stage as well, as long as it remains the medium of instruction in the universities ;

6. that the federal language should become a compulsory subject at the secondary stage when English ceases to be the medium of instruction in the universities.

I have nothing to say on the first. With regard to the other items it appears that the Committee worked in entire ignorance of the decisions arrived at by the other Committee. For, if it had known that that Committee had already decided that at the end of five years from now all education in Indian universities would be given through regional or State language it should have known that no student of the pre-secondary or the secondary classes would be able to enter a university before the medium of instruction in that language had changed into an Indian language. As I observed in my article on that Committee's resolutions, the implementation of its resolutions required that the first year courses in colleges would have to begin instruction through an Indian language by the middle of the next year, as there were some degree courses which took five or more years for completion.

Another impression created by the resolutions of the Secondary Education Committee is that the Committee was unwilling to leave the unscientific rut which the system of pre-university education has been following in this country for several years. Giving up a rut means new adjustments and radical changes, and the organizers of the secondary and primary education do not seem to desire it. This is regrettable. As has been pointed out by the Basic Education Conference held at Patna, any attempt to reduce the period of seven years prescribed for basic education is educationally unsound and should be resisted. Apart from the fact that permanent literacy cannot be achieved within a short period, it is impossibls to realise the objectives of social and civil education before the child is at least fourteen years old.

The Patna resolution is the result of careful examination and experience of several years. The unnecessary haste and short-sighted desire of middle class people to see their children cram English words and recitations as quickly as possible, is the cause behind the demand to bifurcate basic education after the fourth or the fifth year. It is unscientific and not in the interest even of the pupils of the class by which it is made and is positively detrimental to the majority.

There is another defect also in this bifurcator-resolution. The Committee appears to require the pupil to decide at the end of five years whether he was going to complete its studies at the end of the basic education course or whether he was going to the secondary stage also. If the former, English was to be optional for him. If the latter, it was to be compulsory. Since most pupils would be unable to decide at that stage whether they would go in for the secondary course or no, and most of them would also fondly hope that they would do it if they could, the practical result will be that English will have to be compulsorily taken by almost all school children. It would have been simpler to say that at the end of five years, English will be a compulsory language in the basic course than to make this semblance of option through bifurcation. It would seem that we are not satisfied unless we create somewhere a sort of caste. At the end of the five years, pupils have to be divided into an English knowing caste and a not-English knowing caste.

This is not the end of the confusion. Item No. 3 makes the study of the federal or national language compulsory at the end of the senior basic stage and throughout the period of pre-secondary stage, that is to say, for a period of three or more years. But thereafter it will be an optional subject. This means that during the four years of the secondary course time will be given to pupils to forget what little they may have studied during the three years. So this is to be the fate of the study of the lingua franca of the country !

We, who have passed through the present unscientific system, ought to know the great amount of waste of time and energy involved in this practice. It might well be called the 'learn

to forget' method of education. For, students are taught for five years, and the bifurcation enables several to give up learning thereafter, with the result that they lapse into illiteracy. Then some are taught English for three years, and several of these will bid goodbye to schools at the end of that period with the result that most of them will remember no more English than what is needed for reading postal addresses. This system, according to the Committee, is to be made applicable to an additional subject, namely the federal or national language. I strongly feel that the non-acceptance of the advice of the Basic Education Conference, which being a body of experts particularly devoted to this problem is entitled to great respect, is unwise.

To turn again to the resolutions. Item 5 says that at the secondary stage English would be compulsory as long as it remains the medium of instruction in the universities. Even if this Committee did not know what the other Committee had decided, it ought to have known generally that sooner or later the policy of the country would be to give more and more importance to the regional, State or federal languages than to English. Apparently, the Committee does not believe in the seriousness of this policy and assumes that whatever faddists might say, English would continue to enjoy the place of prestige as at present.

Both Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhiji had great dissatisfaction for the organizers of the primary and secondary education of our country on the ground that instead of building up education from below and making university education to start from the point where secondary education left, they had fallen into the habit of following higher education in their organization of the lower one. This is evident from the Committee's resolution that the federal language should become a compulsory subject at the secondary stage when English ceases to be the medium of instruction in the universities. It should have been just the opposite. It ought to have been said that they could not hereafter guarantee that they would be able to provide students for the universities capable enough to follow the English medium of instruction, as they were more interested in giving the basic knowledge a sound foundation. They wanted to see their students well advanced in the knowledge of the regional and the federal language rather than in English. If the universities required better knowledge of English for acquiring higher education, they might make adequate provision by special classes or sessions for teaching that language. The function of secondary education was not to be feeder institutions of the universities but it was the function of the latter to continue the thread of education from where it had been left by the secondary schools.

I am sorry to feel that the Committee's work has been so disappointing.

Wardha, 7-5-'48 K. G. MASHRUWALA

THE POISON OF COMMUNALISM

The following is abridged from a teacher's letter:

"Our Governments have banned communal organizations as illegal. But my experience of it is that though the members of these organizations do not now parade drills or organize other demonstrations, in other respects there is no diminution in their communal hatred. They still gather together under the pretext of prayers, classes, sports, etc. and spread the poison of communalism as before. They speak in praise of Bapu's assassination, and say that other Congress leaders and ministers should meet with the same fate.

"The only result which I, with two or three associates, achieved during the last two or three years is that the membership of the Sangha (R. S. S.) remained within one hundred. But we failed to make any impression on the students who had already become members of that body. I am afraid that the evil results of their propaganda will increase in course of time.

"Most of the members of the R. S. S. are students. In my opinion, it is, therefore, necessary that in order to stop the poisonous propaganda of communalism, the Central Government should order all teachers and professors of schools and colleges in the country to propagate against communalism through their lectures, writings, sports, social functions, etc., both directly and indirectly."

There is no doubt that extremely unfortunate and dangerous ideas have been nourished in our country for several years past. It is not possible to measure the amount of evil which the Hindu and Muslim communalists have done to the country by spreading hatred against one another, and filling the tender and receptive minds of children with vicious ideas. This poison will continue to endanger the health of the body politic for a long time to come. These communalist organizations tellingly illustrate how even the highest university learning, deep study of scriptures, regular participation in rituals, prayers, worship, *namaz*, etc., and observance of religious practices and austerity if it is devoid of the right development of spiritual sentiments, utterly fail to develop in man large-heartedness, all-embracing love and a broad outlook, by which alone, spiritual and moral evolution can be measured. Even as a few grains of arsenic would be sufficient to poison a gallon of milk, the religious learning of *pandits*, *maulvis* and the so-called liberal education of professors and teachers devoid of clear light and development of noble sentiments have turned even the various religions, and the *Gita*, the *Quran* and other scriptures, and religious practices and observances into so many tools in the hands of Satan.

Spreading hatred is easy like coming down a slope. And all our political organizations have been doing this for several years past. Muslim fanatics have spread hatred towards Hindus and Sikhs, the fanatics of the latter have done the same towards Muslims; some Harijan organizations have taught Harijans to

hate the caste Hindus, some *Sanatanis* have done the opposite; Communists and Socialists have created hatred for capitalists as such. Barring Gandhiji none has given the people the message of mutual love and friendliness. It was left to Gandhiji alone to deliver that message, often single-handedly. But he did it with such force that he became intolerable to the propagandists of the cult of hatred and they killed him for it.

There can be no doubt that those who have a full realization of this evil and who have shed all communal vanity from themselves must put forth all their energy to combat it, and to face the same risk which Gandhiji had to.

The correspondent deserves commendation for his efforts, but I would suggest that he (and all of us with him) should continuously ponder over the cause of his imperfect success. Since truth is with those who have abjured communalism, and since we claim to have done so, there must be other deficiencies in us, which obstruct success. We must get over these deficiencies with greater self-discipline, sacrifice and knowledge. They must go by the rule that if the gospel of goodness and love is unable to overcome hatred and evil, there must be weakness somewhere in the votaries, and not in the doctrine of non-violence.

The correspondent desires the Government to pass certain orders. I do not wish to discuss these, because I do not believe that an order to do this or to refrain from doing that, or repressive legislation and administration can remove evil-mindedness and create goodness. The utmost that such measures achieve is to create a show of outward peace. The evil often goes underground and spreads its poison from within like a septic wound merely healed on the surface. As a matter of fact, the main reason, why the so-called Gandhites and Congressites have become a weak force today is, in my opinion, the habit which they have been developing of expecting Governments to do what they themselves and the people ought to do. They have been asking for legislation on every conceivable matter. For instance, Harijans are not allowed to enter a temple, they say, 'pass a law to enable them to enter'; there are communal organizations, charities, institutions, etc., 'pass a law to ban them'; communal hatred has to be eradicated, 'ask teachers and professors to teach in a certain manner'; there is black-marketing and profiteering, 'impose controls and increase the penalties'; the Press is misbehaving, 'suppress the Press'; people do not take to the *charkha*, 'let Government machinery be instituted to propagate it'. In this way, the people, including members of the Congress have been placing more and more reliance on the Government, as if their ideas could live and thrive only if Government came to their aid. This habit will make both the people and the workers weak and diffident.

Just as a good scheme of the Spinners' Association cannot by itself produce any yarn, it can be produced only by the people actually plying the charkha, so too, announcement of a good policy by the Government cannot by itself produce good or remove evil; it can be done only if the subordinate officers of the Government as well as the people search their hearts and actively co-operate to implement that policy. If the Hindu or Sikh officers and intelligentsia and their common people, or the Muslim officers and intelligentsia and their common people have developed deep-rooted passions against another community, no order or legislation, and no announcement of a good and liberal policy or inter-Dominion agreements could succeed. If we examine the facts deeply, it will be found that this is actually what is happenig in both the Dominions to a considerable extent.

Even the minds of the Congressmen and those who swear by Gandhiji are not quite frank and clear on this subject. I have been reading in papers eminent office-bearers in the Congress appealing to the people to be war-minded and to take to military training in their hundreds as if a war was imminent. I doubt if it is in apprehension of a Third World War. I am afraid that the underlying suggestion is a communal war. It is a preparation for a fight between the Hindus and Sikhs against the Muslims, whether the scene of war is in the Indian Union itself, or on the borders of India and Pakistan, or of India and Hyderabad. Even Congressmen and Gandhian workers are becoming unconscious agents of the communalists.

I would, therefore, advise all those who have not an iota of doubt about the necessity of uprooting communalism in every shape and form, to put in their best personal effort and to face all oppositions and obstacles. As towards Government, they should rest content with the fact that its declared policy and intention is in their favour; that the principal heads of the Government, Pandit Jawaharlal and others will stand by them, and not by those who are openly or secretly communal-minded. Their Government might be depended upon to take whatever measures it deems proper for making its policy successful. It should be remembered, however, that the Government methods of doing a right thing or removing an evil will generally be different from that of a non-violent servant of the people. The Government method generally is to get things done by awarding rewards or threatening punishments. At times this creates an appearance of success. But these methods do not work where it is necessary to bring about a change in the opinions and sentiments of a people. That work can be done effectively only by such servants of the people, as have implicit faith in non-communalism. Since the Government also has the same object, unofficial efforts would be a help to it. They will add to its prestige. What I lay stress upon is that *lok-sevaks* (servants of the people) must give up the habit of looking to or asking the Government to do all these things. That habit will bring success neither to the Government nor to the cause. The main work has to be done by the believers in *sarvodaya*, even if all the Government machinery were hopelessly communally-minded.

Bombay, 11-5-'48 K. G. MASHRUWALA

VINOBA AT RAJGHAT — V

Addressing the evening prayer gathering at Rajghat on 30-4-'48 Shri Vinoba said that the day marked the completion of the third month since Gandhiji's departure from this world. Life as well as death of great men bore the same meaning. When they lived they lived a life of detachment from the body. They lived and moved in the realm of the spirit. When they left the body, the removal of the physical hurdle made the soul force stronger so that it acted as a stimulating agent on all sides. He had been having that experience constantly. Gandhiji's memory inspired introspection, and constant observation and inspection. The memory of his day should stimulate every one to perform the duties which lay ahead of him and to watch constantly the progress made therein.

Last week, Shri Vinoba said, he had drawn the attention of the audience to the condition of refugees. He wanted to resume that subject that day. It was four weeks since he had visited the camps for the first time. He had seen their small tents at Panipat and had referred to them in his last speech. Recently he had gone to Buria to look into the problem of those Muslims who were old residents of that place. The road to Buria lay via Panipat. He saw that the small tents still existed there. He had mentioned Panipat by way of illustration only. As a matter of fact the small tents were to be found in every place. It had been decided to remove them immediately. But it had not been done even after three or four weeks. The sun was getting hotter every day. When he considered the condition of children living in those tents he could compare them only with potatoes placed on fire for being steamed. He did not wish to give a detailed description of their pitiful condition. Doubtless, several of the hearers had children and they could imagine what their condition must be. He did not wish to blame anybody in particular for that delay because even those whom he might blame formed ultimately a part of his own society — his larger self. He would, therefore, rather find fault with himself.

He wished to draw particular attention of Congress workers to this problem. Gandhiji had placed the Constructive Programme before the country and had repeatedly laid stress on it. The service of refugees stood at present first in the rank of the Constructive Programme. There was scope for implementation of all the items of the Constructive Programme in serving the refugees. The Congress had appointed a Refugees Relief Committee for carrying on that work. But it would not be right to leave everything to that Committee. It was a work for every one of them. Every worker should take part in it. They should go from house to house and persuade and find out people who would receive some refugee or another to live with them.

The Congress workers had not as yet taken sufficient interest in Constructive Work. Disregard for Constructive Work in the past was to a certain degree excusable, because in the past the main problem before the country was to get rid of the foreign Government. Even those who engaged themselves in the Constructive Programme looked upon it only as a means to get rid of the British Government, and they explained the message of the Constructive Programme to the people in terms of its capacity to create organized strength for the achievement of their political ideal. That approach did enable the Constructive Programme to proceed to a certain extent but Congressmen generally did not feel interested in the Constructive Programme for its own intrinsic value.

They had now got rid of the British Government, and so the Constructive Programme now took the place of first importance in the country for building up the nation. Every activity, Vinobaji said, had two sides — one for destroying the evil and the other for developing the good qualities in society. Both had their place, but if they fixed their attention only on the destructive aspect, even when time had arrived for paying attention to creative aspect, man as was said in the *Upanishad*, "entered the region of darkness". At the stage when the destructive side was important, it had been a programme which demanded sacrifice and hardships of various types. They had ceased to be demanded now. Therefore, if the destructive aspect still continued to sway their thinking, the workers would degenerate into a life given to luxury and ease. That would make the Congress a worthless institution. But if they took up the question of refugees and worked for it, they would get an opportunity of labouring for them and of making real contact with the masses. As matters stood, Congressmen were losing contact with the people. The Socialists had left the Congress; other young men were dissatisfied with it; of the remaining, some had joined the Government and some were after securing power. If securement of power ruled the mind of the Congressmen, they would soon begin to quarrel among themselves, form groups and weaken the Congress. It was far better to dissolve the Congress immediately than to make it a degenerate institution. Because if they dissolved it, they would at least keep alive the memory of that Indian National Congress, which was glorious. If ease and idleness became prominent amongst Congressmen even the old glory of the Congress would vanish. There would be nothing left to remember and be proud of.

He, therefore, entreated the Congress workers to identify themselves with the refugee work. It would purify them and the needy would be able to get their help. If the country rendered them assistance at this period of their unhappiness, they would carry a sense of gratitude and love for the country and that would create good national servants from amongst them. He would, therefore, strongly advise to give other activities a secondary place at that time and make the refugee work their prominent one. They would find that by doing so even the other activities gained in the long run. It was like taking a bath in the sea and thereby acquiring the merit of bathing in every river.

1-5-'48 D. D.

VINOBA AT BURIA JAGHIR

[Buria is a small village about three miles away from Jagadhari, District Ambala, East Punjab, belonging to a Sikh Jaghirdar. Before the disturbance there was a population of about 12,000 Muslims in this Jaghir. Most of them migrated to Pakistan, but on account of Gandhiji's efforts about four to five thousand Muslims decided to stay on in India. Though they have thus stayed, they do not consider themselves to be quite safe. Several refugees from the West Punjab have also settled down in this Jaghir. There is a population of about three hundred Muslims in this particular village. The rest are still hanging on outside its borders in the Saharanpur District of U. P. awaiting an opportunity to return to Buria. Some military has been posted for the protection of the Muslims but it is contemplated to remove it. This has made the Muslims a little nervous. Hence Vinobaji's visit to the village on 25-4-'48. He addressed a meeting arranged on the occasion. The following is a summary of his speech.]

Shri Vinoba said that he had been acquainted with the particular situation of Buria and had gone there with the express purpose of meeting both the Muslims and refugees for cementing friendship among them. He found that both the refugees from the West Punjab as well as the Muslims who had stayed on were in a miserable plight. The former had obtained some lands and houses but they were not as good or comfortable as those which they had left, and the Muslims lived in a state of fear. When two unhappy men met, a bond of sympathy should arise between them. He related the well-known story of Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas. When she was asked by God to choose a boon, she said, "May I always have hardships!" विपदः सन्तु नः शश्वत्। When she was asked to explain the reason for that strange choice, she said that if a person was unhappy he could sympathize with other unhappy people and would constantly remember his Creator. But in happiness man became hard-hearted and forgot the Maker. Shri Vinoba was, however, sorry to observe that although there were two unhappy parties there, there was no sympathy between them. The Muslims were in suspense. They thought they would be unsafe if the military was removed. That was a thing which their neighbours should be ashamed of. They (the neighbours) should assure the Muslims that they were not beasts of prey of whom everyone would be afraid, and that the Muslims need have no fear on their account. They should promise to them that they would stand by them if they were molested by others, and would lay down their own lives first before the Muslims suffered injury. That was the way of creating confidence.

He would also advise the Muslims to give up fear. One of the oft-repeated teachings of the *Quran* was that a man who trusted in God did not fear anyone in the world. A person could live only as long as God willed him to live, and no more. Not a leaf moved but by the will of God. There should therefore be no room for fear.

He entreated both communities to live together as brothers. It was a matter of pride for India that there were Muslims who preferred to stay in Hindustan. It was a credit to our religion. All the religions taught that men should love one another. If the majority did not make themselves responsible for the welfare of the minority, then they would weaken their Government. The Government of India stood for the people of all religions — Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and others, provided that they all lived in mutual friendship. The Government would give full protection to everyone. The refugees should not worry themselves on the ground that if those Muslims who had left their houses returned, the refugees might again become homeless. The Government would look into that problem. He believed that it was possible to find and the Government would find out a solution so that there was no conflict of interest between the two.

In conclusion Shri Vinoba said that he was happy to go to their village. He wanted to go to any place where it was necessary to inspire courage in the people. Real courage came from within but a suggestion from outside was helpful at times. He did not oblige anybody by going there because it was just his duty. He was glad to find that both the Muslims as well as the Jaghirdar, Shri Ratan Amol Singh put trust in him. He was pleased to find that a Sikh had been able to win the confidence of the Muslims there. There had been similar instances elsewhere also, where the Hindus had protected the Muslims and the Muslims had protected the Hindus. That such noble deeds happened inspired the hope that India would go the path of progress.

30-4-'48 D. D.

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